

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 EURE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SS-15
NSC-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 IO-13 /066 W
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O R 171837Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0754

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 02813

AF FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PINT, RH

SUBJECT: TIMES ARTICLE ON RHODESIA

FOLLOWING ARTICLE BY NICHOLAS ASHFORD FILED FROM
JOHANNESBURG APPEARED IN THE FEBRUARY 14 EDITION OF
THE LONDON TIMES.

QUOTE. CAPE TOWN HINT OF FRESH RHODESIA PEACE
TALKS. AFTER A WEEK OF INTENSIVE DIOLOMATIC ACTIVITY
IN WASHINGTON, LONDON AND CAPE TOWN, THE STAGE SEEMS SET
FOR THE LAUNCHING OF YET ANOTHER RHODESIAN PEACE
INITIATIVE.

ACCORDING TO SOUTH AFRICAN SOURCES, THE FIRST MOVE
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IN THIS DIRECTION COULD BE A MEETING BETWEEN MR.
VORSTER, THE PRIME MINISTER, AND SENIOR AMERICAN AND
BRITISH NEGOTIATORS -- PROBABLY MR. VANCE, THE SECRETARY
OF STATE, AND MR. CROSLAND, THE FOREIGN SECRETARY. ALSO
INCLUDED IN SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE MR. PIK BOTHA,
SOUTH AFRICA'S FOREIGN MINISTER-DESIGNATE, AND MR. IVOR
RICHARD, CHAIRMAN OF THE FAILED GENEVA SETTLEMENT

TALKS.

THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. BOTHA TO THE CABINET IS SEEN HERE AS A DELIBERATE ATTEMPT BY MR. VORSTER TO GIVE HIM GREATER LEVERAGE IN GETTING A FRESH INITIATIVE UNDER WAY. WITHIN HOURS OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON FRIDAY OF HIS APPOINTMENT, MR. BOTHA HELD TALKS WITH MR. VANCE ON THE RHODESIAN ISSUE.

HE ALSO HAD A MEETING LAST WEEK WITH MR. WILLIAM SCHAUFEELE, THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, JUST BEFORE MR. SCHAUFEELE FLEW TO LONDON TO JOIN TALKS WITH MR. RICHARD AND THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UNITED NATIONS, MR. ANDREW YOUNG.

TWO ASPECTS NOW RECEIVING SCRUTINY AMONG DIPLOMATS IN CAPE TOWN ARE MR. IAN SMITH'S IDEA OF A REFERENDUM AMONG RHODESIAN BLACKS TO DISCOVER WHICH NATIONALIST LEADER HAS MOST SUPPORT, AND MR. SMITH'S REPORTED UNDERTAKING TO MR. VORSTER LAST WEEK THAT HE WAS STILL COMMITTED TO MAJORITY RULE ON THE TERMS OF THE KISSINGER "PACKAGE".

MEANWHILE, ATTEMPTS TO FORM A NEW ALLIANCE AMONG WHITE SOUTH AFRICAN OPPOSITION PARTIES APPEAR TO HAVE COLLAPSED AFTER WEEKEND MEETINGS BETWEEN THE LEADERS OF THE UNITY PARTY' THE PROGRESSIVE REFORM PARTY AND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

MR. KOWIE MARAIS, A FORMER JUDGE WHO HAS BEEN CHAIRING A COMMITTEE EXAMINING THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW POLITICAL GROUPING, ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT THE THREE PARTIES HAD FAILED TO AGREE ON AN INTERPRETATION OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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"14 PRINCIPLES" WHICH HIS COMMITTEE HAD DRAWN UP AS A BASIS FOR THE MERGER.

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OUR SALISBURY CORRESPONDENT WRITES: MR. REGINALD COWPER, THE RHODESIAN MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND COORDINATION, HAS RESIGNED AFTER WEEKS OF MOUNTING CRITICISM. HE SAID THAT HE WAS LEAVING HIS JOB BECAUSE HE FELT IT WAS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY.

HIS PRINCIPAL CONCERN, HE SAID, WAS THE MORALE OF RHODESIANS, WHO HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO A PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE COUNTRY'S ABILITY TO WIN THE OUERRILLA WAR. MR. COWPER, WHO WAS APPOINTED TO THE TWIN POSTS LAST SEPTEMBER, HAD BEEN AN IMPRESSIVE JUNIOR MINISTER AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, BUT AS A DEFENCE MINISTER HE WAS NEVER ABLE TO BUILD UP A RAPPORT WITH THE SECURITY FORCES.

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THE CALL-UP OF MEN BELOW 38 FOR LENGTHY PERIODS IN THE FIELD, AND HIS RECENT DECISION TO CALL UP MEN IN THE 38-50 AGE GROUP, ANGERED COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY AND THE FARMING COMMUNITY.

OUR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT WRITES: MR. ANDREW YOUNG, AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, SAID ON HIS RETURN FROM HIS AFRICAN TOUR THAT IT WOULD TAKE YEARS TO ACHIEVE BLACK MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA. MR. YOUNG CRITICIZED DR. KISSINOER, WHO "PUT A BURDEN ON BRITAIN'S BACK AND THEN ABANDONED IT". BUT IN PLAINS, GEORGIA, PRESIDENT CARTER SAID THAT THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND THE TRANSITION PREVENTED MR. FORD AND DR. KISSINGER FROM PLAYING A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN THE DISPUTE. END QUOTE.

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